

Native American Veterans Association

“It’s a matter of knowing your community and knowing where to access services.”

– Glenna Amos, Executive Director, NAVA

Program Description

The Native American Veterans Association (NAVA) is a mutual, fraternal, non-profit organization in the Los Angeles, CA, area. Los Angeles has the largest population of American Indian and Alaska Native homeless veterans. The organization provides a variety of case management services, including job placement, financial advising for seniors, and assistance with accessing medical benefits and care. NAVA also hosts an annual powwow and other social gatherings for Native veterans.

Successful Strategies

Partnership

NAVA partners with the local U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) offices and has a close relationship with the Long Beach VA. NAVA provides referral services to Long Beach VA for mental health, drug and alcohol counseling, and other health issues.

The organization also partners with the Department of Employment veterans representatives on employment services. The Department identifies veterans in need, and NAVA works with them to remove the veterans’ barriers to employment. NAVA also works closely with various Southern California tribes.

NAVA is currently working with the city of Southgate, CA, to create an urban gardening program for elderly and disabled veterans. The program is still in the planning phase, but it has generated a considerable amount of interest in the community.

Operated by: NAVA is an independent non-profit organization.

Location: Long Beach, CA

Contact Information:

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Community: NAVA serves Native veterans in the Los Angeles area and is not affiliated with a particular tribe.



LTSS Research: Veteran Support

Native American Veterans Association

Funding

Currently, NAVA receives funding primarily from individual donations and membership fees. The organization has received successful grant funding in the past and is seeking additional grant opportunities.

“The fraternal part of our program is that we have a variety of activities throughout the year to bring people together”

– Glenna Amos

Cultural Considerations

NAVA takes great pains to know the Los Angeles Native community and the barriers it faces when trying to access proper care. NAVA also helps elderly veterans who went through the boarding school program as children cope with the long-term effects of exposure to trauma.

Future Considerations

NAVA would like to open additional chapters beyond the Los Angeles area, beginning with the city of Southgate, CA, which has a large American Indian and Alaska Native population. NAVA is seeking additional funding opportunities to meet this goal.